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# Diary of the Mexican War

By THOMAS BAILEY, Musician, Company C, Fifth Regiment,  
Indiana Volunteers

Mustered in October 30, 1847. Company C. Capt. Robert M. Evans. James H. Lane, Colonel. Allen May, Lieut. Colonel. Fifth Regt.

Oct. 31. Sunday. On this morning embarked on board of Steam Boat "Wave" in company with Company H. Capt. E. G. Cary<sup>1</sup> and Company I Capt. Mahlon D. Manson<sup>2</sup> and Co. [?] was in the cabin and the below deck, the whole under command of Maj. John H. Myers and after a fine ride we arrived at Jeffersonville at 9 o'clock at night, landed and layed by all night, no soldiers allowed to go on shore.

Nov. 1. Monday. Left Jeffersonville about 10 o'clock, passed the Falls, water rather low, the S. Boat Phoenix close in our rear and S. Boat Ne Plus Ultra about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile ahead, run all day, fine weather, had a fine view of Louisville and Albany; saw S. boats at several landings.

Nov. 2. Tuesday. Having run all night at daylight passed Evansville, at 11 o'clock passed the mouth of the Wabash.

Nov. 3. Wednesday. Having run all night at daylight at Island No. 16 in Mississippi; run all day, passed Memphis at 7 p. m. At 7 p. m. run on for a few hours, fog arose. Stopped at a "wody" and, wooded [took on cordwood for engineer]; started again and got lost in the fog. layed by till morning at a cotton farm. today we were racing from 12 o'clock till near night with S. Boat Phoenix and most of the time both boats just abreast. Just above Memphis we wooded and Phoenix passed us. She stopped at Memphis and we passed her.

Nov. 4. Thursday. This morning [stopped at] the Cot-

<sup>1</sup> Died January 14, 1848.

<sup>2</sup> Of Crawfordsville; Congressman 1871-1873; died at Crawfordsville February 4, 1895.

ton farm between 9 and 10 o'clock and left two of our men on shore, Sam Cosner and William Hays, both supposed to have deserted afterwards. Cosner was taken by our officers out of the Fourth Ten. Regt. of Vol. at camp at Molino and afterwards made a good soldier. They both joined that Regiment at Memphis where Hays again deserted and has not been heard of since. today passed Helena, in the afternoon run the Horse-Shoe bend, passed the mouth of White River at 7 p. m. about two hours after Jas. H. Bartlett of Capt. Cary's Company fell overboard and was lost. the yawl was sent after him but he sunk before they got to him, it was very dark.

Nov. 5. Left landing where we had stopped for fog during previous night and run a few miles. Stopped for fog about 9 a. m. this morning; at 10 a. m. started and run all day and passed Vicksburg at 10 o'clock at night.

Nov. 6. Saturday. waked up, we were landed at a wood yard, today, passed Grand Gulf at 9 o'clock a. m., fine looking country on shore. Passed Natchez at 5 o'clock p. m. and landed to wood this evening, run down in sight of Ellusis Cliffs.

Nov. 7. Having run all night wooded [in] the morning early above Baton Rouge. Run all day. Very fine country. Sugar farms. Arrive at Lafayette at 9 o'clock. Here we lay all night, no one allowed to go on shore.

Nov. 8. Left Lafayette at 7 a. m. run down to lower end of Algiers on west side of river opposite New Orleans. Stopped by the side of Ship Thamowo, S. Boat Phoenix on the side, Ship Tiberias above and Palestine and Victory and several below; put Capt. Cary's company on the Thamawo at 11. The steam ship Alabama anchored in river close to us, the Wave soon after went to her to put us on board of her, she was not ready to receive us and we were put on board the ship Sophia laying above the Thamawo out in the river, till the Alabama could get her coal and get ready; here we passed the night on the Sophia.

Nov. 9. Tuesday. On board the Sophia; left here at 8 in evening went on board of the Q. M. Dept. Job boat, Colonel Clay, run up to Lafayette to go on board of the

Alabama Steam Ship. When arrived there was ordered to go back and anchor out in the river, did so. After runing into the Alabama and smashing her boat and then run into stern of the S. Boat Chas. Carroll, went down to Sophia and anchored in middle of river, had to sleep in hold without any food or any place to cook till next day at 1 o'clock. While laying here I took possession of a negro peddling yawl and went to city shore and spent day in city.

Nov. 10. "Col. Clay" started to Alabama where our Company and Company I commenced going on board of the Alabama. She laying at same place the Wave On Sunday night at 7 oclock steam ship started for Vare Cruiz. She had a number of horses on board also a number of officers [of] Company C and I; we run down 10 or 12 miles, had to stop for fog.

Nov. 11. Left the landing at 6 a. m. run on down river passed Ft. Jackson about 1 o'clock and before dark were out of sight of land.

Nov. 12. Friday, fine weather run all day and night.

Nov. 13. Fine weather run as usual; I was some sea sick.

Nov. 14. Sunday. fine weather, running as usual.

Nov. 15. Monday morning, a severe storm raging, came on at 10 oclock continued all day, land in sight. continued beating land with bow to the wind.

Nov. 18. Storm abated in the night about 12 oclock and commenced raining. We commenced running for Vera Cruz, came in sight about 10 oclock a. m. came to anchor at 11, passed English Mail Steamer Severn of London, and anchored just between the castle<sup>3</sup> and town behind the Severn and two of U. S. war vessels, name not known. a large amount of shipping steamers to the right of us. at 12 o'clock we landed on the mole in Vera Cruz and marched out about two miles to camp. Where [we] were encamped [with] part of First, Second Dragoons also 3 Ten. Vol. and some of U. S. Artillery in a rather open plain close to a church.

Nov. 17. We were here in camp, from this to the 25 we was hard at drill. Having drew our muskets and accouterments also our canteens.

<sup>3</sup> San Juan de Ulloa.

Nov. 25. All up this morning at 3 o'clock and commenced our march to City of Mexico. Started soon after day light Our Regiment in advance and our Company, C, at the head of the Column. We stopped at the second arched bridge for dinner till our train of wagons did ascend the high sandy hill, passed Santa Fe. We here had a shower of rain, then passed over a large rolling plain and here met some troops and some wagons. We encamped at a small river 18 miles from Vera Cruz; we found stationed here some of the mounted men from Georgia; today passed through an uncultivated land with all the ranchers houses burnt, had a fine cool day to march, through a sandy road.

Nov. 25. Friday. started at 8 o'clock a. m., passed several arched bridges and encamped on the Sawana; fine and cool all day, ranches all burnt, more uneven land, very little sign of cultivation.

Nov. 27. Saturday. Marched to the National Bridge and encamped just beyond. Passed two arched bridges; today found a number of regulars stationed here. found first buildings here, some fine ones and some in a wretched state.

Nov. 28. Sunday. Started early march to Plan del Rio. [a small town] our company in rear guard today. We encamped beyond a broken bridge on an elevated piece of ground close to the ruins of an old church, most of houses in ruins, an old fort just above the bridge all in ruins, having been blown up with powder to [prevent] reinforcements from reaching Gen. Scott [at Cerro Gordo].

Nov. 29. Monday. started early, marched up hill all day and encamped at fine creek called En Ereno; here found several houses in ruins, no timber in sight fine grass country. weather fine, cool, as we were very high up on mountains. Several fine ranches in sight at a long distance, Several fine ranches at our camp but evacuated by owners or residents. We tore off the roofs for fire wood. today we marched through the Cerro Gordo Pass, saw lots of canon balls over the ground and three brass cannon in the road two of them in the Cerro Gordo redoubt all of their carriages gone and none but the guns left, first few miles very hilly after we got through

Cerro Gordo, a rising lofty elevated prairie almost among the clouds, very good roads for last three day, all paved and all the dust in them lime.<sup>4</sup>

Nov. 30. Tuesday. left camp at El Reno and marched up mountains, nearly all of the time we appeared to be near tops, we could see clouds between [us] and the tops, they appeared close to us today. the country looked fine but not settled, passed several ranches, saw corn, and lots of fruit and saw some cultivation, nearly all of the fences stone. some corn up, some planted. Oranges and other fruits all ripe, and plenty, saw peach trees in bloom and with fruit on, very good water, cool, After marching 6 miles passed by Jalapa and after 3 miles more came to camp. Called campe Buttes. Saw little of city, the shrubs and garden fine. Finest kind of oranges, peaches and apples in abundance, people gathering fruit and plowing and planting.

Dec. 1. Wednesday. In camp at dress parade; in the evening we had a general firing off of guns, nothing of note till Dec. 5.

Dec. 5. Sunday. Commenced march Wed. early again, passed through a settled country, up the mountains all the time, passed through several villages came to pine timber on the mountain. Got so high as to be among the clouds, could see them above and below, before and behind us, in road like a thick fog. during the march in the clouds it was drisly, we passed several places that had been volcanoes, on the apparent top was a vast amount of lava and rocks, all look like if they had been melted and resembled about 3 miles of blacksmith cinder showing that there has been terrible irruptions and earth quakes as the mountains appeared be of melted stone on the top; several Mexican fortifications, two of them redoubts crossing the road, with embrasures for cannon; before we got to our camp we passed La Joya where Capt. Walker with 45 men defeated 300 Lancers in just 47 minute by the watch, killing 67 without the loss of a man. this evening we encamped at Los Vegas close by an unfinished church, among clouds. we were so elevated it was cold, drizzling and disagreeable.

<sup>4</sup> The battle of Cerro Gordo had been fought on the preceding April 18, 1847.

Dec. 6. Monday. We marched from Las Vegas early and arrived at the Castle of Perote at about 2 p. m. today, passed several vilages; first part of the road clay, traveled along above clouds; after 8 or 10 miles descended from clay mountains into a sand valley that extended to Perote; on the mountains fine lumber, pine, cedar and evergreens, valley close to Perote in better cultivation than any land seen yet in Mexico. The town small and ill-looking. we encamped between the castle and town.

Dec. 7. Tuesday. Left the castle of Perote and marched to a village called San Juan near 28 miles, no timber in sight in our whole days march in the immense sandy plain; the mountains at a great distance on both sides of the road, when we started this morning the Sugar Loaf Mt. right in center of the plain looked as if it was close to us, we just had partly passed the mound when we came to our camp; the top of Orizaba in sight all day; no cultivation to-day; only passed two ranches, only one of them inhabited; it was on the left of the road, 11 miles from Perote; here we found the water salty, here the Colonel gave out one wagon load of bread extra to our regiment. We marched all day, camped close to the village, on very level ground, at a distance from mountains, had a very disagreeable marching in dust and sand but fine camp ground.

Dec. 8. Wednesday marched from San Juan to Talpeca about 30 miles all day in same plain as at Perote, same sort of road as yesterday, no timber. Saw no cultivation today but saw ranches at a distance from road. Our Company in middle and wagons as guards. Today lost 4 men out of our Brigade, who gave out and lagged behind the rear guards and were taken by the Mexicans—one from Ten. Regiment, 2 from our Regt. company B. Capt. [George] Green and one from Co. I Capt. Manson [William H.] Marshall of Co. B. came to us at Molino del Rey. the other two of our Regiment were killed, the Tennesseeman has never been heard of.

Dec. 9. Marched all day to Agua or warm springs, still in the plain, fine camping ground very close to foot of mountain; to-day drew flour for first time. Dress parade this evening of our brigade, Fifth Ind. vols. and 3rd Ten. vol.

all fired off their guns and alarmed the brigade that had just arrived at Talpeca consisting of Third and Fourth Ky. volunteers some Dragoons and Artillery. the Dragoons came to our camp to see if we had been attacked, also the Third Ky. Regiment was formed and started to us but returned to camp at Talpeca.

Dec. 10. Left camp at Agua and marched to El Penon, passed 3 villages, left plain after several miles of it. today well cultivated fields of corn for miles, ditches for fences and muscat (mesquite) plants for heges, soon after leaving the plain came to Nopalucan, the second village passed today. Here we purchased some Mexican bread. We were rear guard to day and was here in town till the advance guard of the Kentucky Brigade arrived in town, Maj. Genl. [William O.] Butler and escort; soon after we passed another town there was a report of an attack in front. The wagons were formed in double line and the brigade closed up and prepared for an attack. some of our Company thought they could see the Lancers about a mile from road among the bushes and muscat [mesquit] plants on the left. I saw them but could not tell whether Lancers or other Mexicans; we saw clouds of dust at a distance on both sides of road in an apparant village, some sayed raised by the Mexican Lancers. Soon after came to our camp at a small mud wall village close to foot of an almost perpendicular mountain. Here we used water from a made pond that was filled in the wet season.

Dec. 11. Saturday. marched from El Penon to Amozoe and encamped in the main Plaza; today for first few miles we marched right along under the mountains the road running right at the foot. Soon after we left the mountains we passed through a village, the country in places some cultivated, lofty and rolling road very dusty and sandy especially near Amozoe; just before we arrived at camp we passed through El Penon Pass; was near a mile long and was a road cut through rock some places hardly wide enough for two wagons to pass. The sides of the appearant wall so steep as to not allow a man to get out at more than one or



two places, with trees and bushes growing on the edges that completely covered it from end to end.

Dec. 12. Sunday. Marched from Amozoe to Puebla, same dusty and sandy road. country hilly, well cultivated for Mexico. It was here at edge of city [we were met] by Our gallant countryman Gen. [Joseph] Lane also 4th Ind. Vol. we marched through a good part of the city, found it a large splendid city, houses 2 and 3 stories high. built in the old Spanish style, with many fine churches, we were quartered in a large church west of the Great Church, an immense building, as part of it, supplied our whole regiment with quarters, with open courts full of fruit trees with splendid fountains of good water.

Dec. 13. Monday. In the large cathedral or church resting, got orders at one o'clock to prepare to march at 4 o'clock p. m. which was incorrect in the end.

Dec. 14. Tuesday. This morning left out quarters for the city of Mexico and after a long fatiguing march of 30 miles we arrived at San Martins and encamped in one of the Plazas; today marched through a well cultivated country all the ground in good cultivation could see many from road. When about 12 miles from Puebla at ranch, we was wheeled into platoons in expectation of an attack, but it was all a flare up to get the men in ranks, as we seen no enemy all day; we got to camp after dark. here this evening the orderly sargeant of Company B was stabled by a Mexican; it was only a slight flesh wound.

Dec. 15. Wednesday. Marched from San Martins to Rio Frio near 28 miles, most of the fields watered by ditches bringing water from the mountains, which were on both sides of the road. Soon began to assend the mountains; for a while found it under good cultivation, good pine timber, close to Rio Frio found lots of trees acrost road to prevent General Scott from advancing on the City [Puebla], passed one large arched bridge, close to camp found an arched bridge gone and a tempory wooden one and here also Mexican breast-works; about noon we had about 20 pack mules stolen and retaking of them delayed us, so it was near dark when we

entered camp, the highest and coldest in Mexico. Today Captain [Samuel] McKenzy and some others got behind the rear guards and were taken by Guerrilas; the same night one of them came in to camp nearly naked and reported McKenzy wounded and taken prisoner.

Dec. 16. Thursday. March from Rio Frio to within about 15 miles of the City and encamped close to a lake and a very indifferent village of unburnt brick; we traveled up hill a short distance and then down hill to near our camp; on those Rio Frio mountains there was good pine and cedar timber, also oak and laurel.

Dec. 17. Friday. Marched from our mud built village to the City road, very good; marched in by Penon road; saw the great fortifications that were raised to meet General Scott that were never used, as he turned them and entered the City by other side. We marched passed the front of the Great Cathedral and was quartered two squares west of the main Plaza and Cathedral on the south side of the street in the large Convent of Santa Clara.

Dec. 18. In quarter; nothing of note but drill three times a day. Alameda a great square of at least 20 acres, planted with all sorts of trees so as to represent a Park with fine paved walks and splendid fountain and trees making a great shady place, great for walking for citizens. City has narrow irregular rough paved streets, all of the houses built in Spanish style with portico and windows. The entrance a very large door. Some similar to our barn doors in size but more like our prison doors to allow their carriages, wagons and mules to enter; the lower rooms are the abode of mules and mustangs; and here the slaves or lower class live; the wealthy Mexicans living always in the upper story. The stories are higher than in the states being mostly near 15 feet high. There are many Churches built in a very firm and lasting manner; Some of them in the greatest of splendor and has few equals in the world. the main Church room is near 500 feet long and more than 100 ft wide with an arched roof about 100 feet high. Supported by 16 columns in two rows at least 8 feet thick this room does not occupy  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the vast building.

Jan. 17-1848. Today our Regiment moved out to the plain of Molino del Rey. about 5 miles from the City and beyond the great Castle of Chapultepec. we were here encamped on an extensive plain, very level. our camp about a mile from Toculy, our sentinels close by the Kings mills or Molino del Rey, here we still drill three times, a day, so we did not have much time to do nothing and the most of the time it was very warm in day time but cold at night. the Castle of Chapultepec is about one mile nearer the City than Molino; it was the Mexican Military Collidge; it is built over the top of a hill altogether of stone; it is about a mile in circumference at the base about 300 feet above the level plain; the castle covers near ten acres of the whole top on the side next to the City, the hill is nearly perpendicular; the base of the hill is surrounded by large gardens with old shade trees in abundance so as to make a splendid Park or Garden, on the west side a great Park of more than 20 acres, immense large cedar trees altogether, a great many of them over 3 feet, all the trees are supposed to have been planted by the ancient Mexicans; there are more than 100 acres of ground in the garden. Parks and vacant courts, together with the Hill, are surrounded by a wall near 20 feet; the road from City to Molino goes through this enclosure. I noticed one cedar tree at the foot of the Hill where the road stars up to the Castle, that was 60 feet around, had an immense top in a very thrifty growing state, the Hill and the Castle Chapultepec are surrounded by a very level plain, very nearly and partly covered with water. all of the fences are ditches from 8 to 10 feet wide and from 6 to 8 feet filled with water. nothing of any note but Camp news, and very hard at drill.

May 13. Saturday. This evening at 10 o'clock we started from our Camp at Molino and in the following morning arrived in the town of San Augustin, 15 miles south of the City of Mexico near the foot of the mountains, we traveled all night, it was tolerable cool, though not very unpleasant, the road settled all the way; we passed many houses or ranches, we were quartered in a large Amphitheater, or circus together with Company's D, E, H, and J this is a fine town with very large and splendid gardens and orchards with many

apples peaches and with fine water and great shade as the plaza was filled with good shade trees. Here, we quite drilling and had none but dress parade in afternoon at 4 o'clock. In the west edge of this town they make the factory cloth as in the states, they have all parts going on picking, carding, spinning, weaving, they here also make some woolen clothing and blankets of many different colors.

May 30. Tuesday. Today ordered for a grand inspection of arms and accouterments, all are cleaning up guns, we are expecting to march in few days.

May 31. Wednesday. In quarters preparing to march tomorrow.

June 1. Thursday. Drum beat at 2 o'clock did not move till daylight, on our way to Vera Cruz passed Cherubusco, here left the road to the city, turned to the east to come to the great road from Mexico to Vera Cruz, encamped in village at the foot of a large hill called Mexicalcingo, in sight of the city and Penon.

June 2. Friday. Marched very [early] our Regiment in the advance, marched across the uncultivated plain and came to the great road east of Penon, passed the road about 10 o'clock, there we encamped at Dec. 16. As we came up marched to the mountains just before we got to our camp where we passed a small creek, we found two men murdered and thrown down a deep chasm. We encamped tonight in Muscat (mesquit) plant field. Today Boyd of Co. E. was killed by falling off a stone on his head when he was resting. [No such name in roster of regiment.]

June 3. Saturday. Today marched to the Rio Frio where we camped on Dec. 15 most of the way up hill, first few miles yellow clay soil all the way. Tolerable good timber, evergreen. This morning, started late as we had to wait for the Fourth Regiment Tenn. to start as it was their day to go in the advance.

June 4. nearly all way down hill, pine timber, fine farms, camped  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile beyond San Martin in a wheat field.

June 5. Monday. We were in advance. Started early had gone ten miles by sunrise. left camps before 3 o'clock. fine cultivation all the way, dusty. We passed through the

city of Puebla and encamped in the edge of the city a small Park or Alameda with fine water. A long march today level ground, just as we get our tents up came on a hard rain and hail.

June 6. Fourth Tennessee Regiment in advance marched over an uneven rocky country to a small village to within 8 miles of Ely Penon where we encamped on Dec. 10. in the square, rain again.

June 7. Wednesday. Started last. Third Tennessee Regiment in advance passed Ell Penon at 9 o'clock, passed Nopalucan at 11. here we took a left hand road, sayed to be nearer, 7 miles beyond Nopalucan camped in a large plain close to ranch, rain again.

June 8. Thursday. Marched early Fifth Indiana Regiment in advance, a sandy uneven country mostly uncultivated, some large fine farms, fields of corn all size below the waist of man; encamped here raining.

June 9. Friday. Marched from San Francisco to Castle of Perote a long march. After 6 or 7 miles passed San Juan where we encamped on Dec. 7. today marched through mud for first time in Mexico. fine fields of corn.

June 10. Saturday. Started early, Third Tennessee Regiment in advance, commenced raining, passed Las Vegas at 11 o'clock, soon after ascended the mountains, marched through the black pass, and encamped on the left of a village and road in a small plain within 10 miles of Jalapa, continued raining during our march today for first [time] broke a number of wagons coming over the hills.

June 11. Sunday. Started early not raining. cloudy, met some Mexican soldiers and large trains of heavy waggons, passed camp Patterson marched through city of Jalapa and encamped 6 miles beyond.

June 12. Camped, rested from long march awaiting for shipping to arrive at Vera Cruz.

June 13 Tuesday

June 14 Wednesday

June 15 Thursday

June 16 Friday.

Yesterday had a mass meeting of soldiers at Col. Lane's;

asked of Democrats to repond to the nominations of Gen. Cass for President and Genl. W. O. Butler for Vic. President.

June 17. Saturday. Today moved our camp from old ground over a mile to just east of the bridge where we camped Nov. 29. raining.

June 18. Sunday, raining and continued all night.

June 19. Monday. Encamped; orders to be ready to start tomorrow at  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour's notice.

June 20. Thursday. In camp; rain slightly this morning

June 21. Sill raining.

June 22. Moved camp from the bridge one or two miles up creek.

June 23. In camp, raining

June 24. Saturday. In camp preparing to march this evening.

June 25. Sunday. Reville beat at 12 o'clock a. m. raining hard, did not march until day light. Passed Plan Del Rio or Broken Bridge at 11 o'clock A. M. this night encamped at a Rancho 4 from the National Bridge, very far to go for water.

June 26. Marched at daylight passed the National Bridge encamped at Owiegas, on the North side of the road, in a small field close to the West bank of river.

June 27. Commenced march at 2 o'clock, passed the bridge we encamped Nov 26, marched to San Juan before daylight. encamped met U. S. Mail here.

June 28. Marched at 4 o'clock for Vera Cruz encamped on the beach 3 miles from Cera Cruz.

June 29. Started at 6 o'clock marched to city at one O'clock p. m. embarked on ship Elizabeth of Philadelphia Companys B, C, D, E, I, in command of Maj. Myers and at 6 o'clock p. m. was towed out and sailed with a light East wind.

June 30. Friday. Sailing, two ship in sight.

July 1. Saturday. Sailing, wind same as yesterday.

July 1. Sunday. Wind same as yesterday, today the "Ship Rockall" that was all the way in a few miles of us to leeward passed us close to our windward, with in speaking

distance. Part of Third Regiment of Tennessee on board.

July 3. Monday. Calm all day. "Rockall" a few miles ahead.

July 4. Saw two steam ships on their way to Vera Cruz.

July 5. Calm at 9 o'clock was taken in tow by Star and the Rockall also; had a hard rain had to be towed again. Anchored at the Balize bar.<sup>5</sup>

July 5. Thursday. Passed the bar early and Fort Jackson at 3 o'clock.

July 7. Run down below Algiers and anchored out near the middle of the river the Rockall just ahead of us.

July 8. Saturday at 10 o'clock all five companys embarked on Steam boat Pike N 8 [Number 8] for Madison, Ind. run to New Orleans there stopped until 6 in evening.

July 17. Today we arrived at Madison at 3 o'clock P. M. passed through the Canal at Louisville Ky. this morning at daylight all soldiers took boarding mostly amongst the Citizens as the boarding houses were full with the Fourth Regiment Indiana Volunteers who were waiting to be discharged.

July 27. Today at 3 o'clock p. m. Company C. was mustered out the service of the U. S. A.

THOMAS BAILEY.

<sup>5</sup> Mouth of Mississippi river.